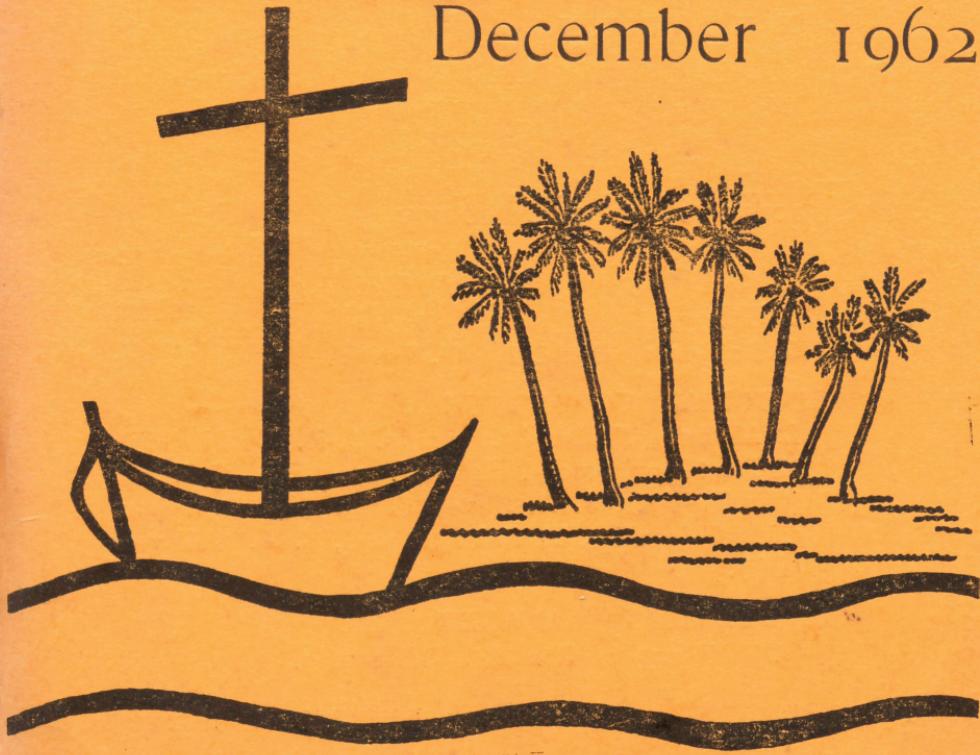


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# THE PACIFIC JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

December 1962



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## The Pacific Journal of Theology

*Published Quarterly*

### EDITOR

J. Bradshaw, Box 422, W. Samoa.

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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C. E. Norwood, Box 184, W. Samoa.

NUMBER FIVE

DECEMBER 1962

## From The Editor

## From the Circulation Manager

The accounts for the year-ending 31st December, 1962 have now been prepared and audited and will go forward to the next meeting of the Continuation Committee. Here, it will be sufficient to say that, owing to the generosity of the former International Missionary Council, who made available a substantial subsidy from the Carnahan Fund, we have been able to launch the Journal and build up to a circulation of four hundred and ninety nine in our first year. We closed the books with a comfortable balance at the Bank of Western Samoa.

Already some of you have made use of the blue form and sent in your subscriptions for 1963. It will be most helpful, further, if those Churches, Missions and Theological Colleges which take out bulk subscriptions, would renew at the earliest moment.

Keeping a Journal like this moving does entail an appreciable amount of work — and this service is gladly given, for we believe in the worth of this Journal. Prompt payment of subscriptions goes a long way to lighten our labour.

For your help in the past and for the help we hope to have from you in the future, then, the word is **THANK YOU!**

CLARENCE E. NORWOOD.

Box 184, APIA, Western Samoa,

11th January, 1962.

## From The Editor

Readers will already have learned from the information supplied by our Circulation Manager that things are well with the *Journal* financially. But the editor regrets to have to report that from his desk the situation looks far less satisfactory. It is surely correct policy that the majority of our contributors should be Pacific nationals, and the plain fact is that it is proving very difficult to keep up a satisfactory flow of that material. If the *Journal* is to continue to fulfil the purpose for which it was founded — that of promoting theological discussion — a far greater number of our readers must become writers. The editor wishes to encourage new writers to get in touch with him before sending articles and assures them that whatever they send will receive his kind consideration.

Apart from full articles the *Journal* will be glad to print comments written in the light of the articles, and we wish to draw the attention of readers to this fact.

It may of course prove to be the case that the 1961 Consultation on Theological Education was wrong in thinking that the Pacific churches need a *Journal of Theology*. We must be prepared to accept that we are not yet ready for it, but we must explore further before taking that conclusion as inevitable. Two of the causes are undoubtedly the difficult communications in the area and, stemming from that, a lack of realisation of the seriousness of the position, since it is so easy to assume that other island groups can more readily contribute to the *Journal*. The editor very much hopes that as a result of this word he may be able to report more favourably in the issue after next.

Concerning the present issue of the *Journal* it will be seen that in place of the usual short book reviews there is an extended review of one book. Short reviews will be held over until the next issue.

## An Editorial Review

If space explorers find human beings on another planet, will Christian theology need revision? Have many Christians made the mental gear-change needed to adjust to the fact that human life began on earth not two thousand years before the calling of Abraham (and the beginning of salvation history) but more than fifty thousand years earlier? Was the non-Christian period in Oceania, which continued for eighteen hundred years after the birth of Jesus Christ, a period of preparation for the Gospel—the Old Testament period of Oceania, or was it in this respect at least a complete waste of time? Should the Churches cooperate with the Mormons?

These were some of the questions brought to the editor's mind as he read *The Theology of the Christian Mission*<sup>1</sup>. Professor G H. Anderson of Union Theological Seminary, Manila, who edited the book is to be congratulated upon the scheme and its execution which has resulted in a most important work. However, the length of the book will be an obstacle to those readers for whom English is a second language, and so I propose to set down what seems to me to be the principal theme running through the first, third and fourth parts, namely, *The Biblical Basis of the Christian Mission, Christianity and other Faiths and Theory of Mission*. The second section which provides some history of the development of missions and mission theory among Protestants and Roman Catholics suffers from brevity, and forms a digression from the main theme, though a necessary one.

What then is the theme? It may perhaps be stated as follows: What is the attitude that God wills the Christian to have towards the non-Christian, his religion, and his culture?

In order to set a limit to our discussion in this brief editorial review of the book, let us assume with the majority of the twenty-seven contributors that the answer to our question is to be found by a right interpretation of the Bible. This limitation implies that

1. Mc Graw-Hill, \$6.50, 341 page, with bibliography

we shall regard as secondary the kind of evidence brought by H. de Wolf (p. 211) when he states that certain African converts regarded their pre-Christian way of life as *fulfilled* (and not displaced) by the Gospel.

It is not difficult to learn from the Bible the attitude that God wishes us to have to the non-Christian *himself*. Probably all the contributors would agree with Max Warren (p. 234 f.) when he develops from Paul's teaching the message that we are to become *identified* with those whom we would *serve*, holding fast to the truth that we, like them, are men and that by grace alone are we saved. We may consider as a particular consequence of Christian identification H. Kraemer's plea which he renews in a letter to the editor of the book: that the Churches should establish small groups of experts at strategic centres in various parts of the world, men and women who would enter into the non-Christian cultures and give informed guidance to all who would bring to them the Gospel.

It is more difficult, however, to be certain of the attitude that God wishes us to have to the religion and culture of the non-Christian, for the reason that there are differences of opinion as to whether or not the Bible itself claims that its revelation is unique, exclusive and universal. On the whole, the contributors to Dr. Anderson's book resist the temptation to rest their interpretation on a particular text such as 'there is salvation in no one else' (Acts 4: 12), or on the other hand 'he did not leave himself without witness' (to the nations)—Acts 14: 17. They proceed from more general considerations, as by a comprehensive examination of Old and New Testament books. Let us consider first the argument advanced by those who say that the Bible claims that its revelation is unique, exclusive and universal.

At the conclusion of his chapter on *The Old Testament Basis for the Christian Mission*, G. E. Wright states that 'there can be no doubt that the Biblical witness demands an exclusivism of faith, and that particularly, so when the God and Father of Jesus Christ is known as the God before whom all other gods are idols' (page 30). Karl Barth, in his *Exegetical*

*Study of Matthew 28: 16-20* draws attention to the meaning of the words 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me', and writes 'There are therefore no such things as natural law and natural power asserting their own domain over against Jesus' deserving homage, trust, fear and obedience in their own right.' Thus, Jesus is the Christ of the whole created world; he is the unique, universal King. Hence Kraemer<sup>2</sup> regards the Christian revelation as absolute and unique, while all non-Christian religions, being based not on revelation but on human effort and wisdom are inadequate.

As Kraemer has stated and as Tillich and de Wolf point out in this present book, the exclusive claim of the Christian revelation only takes hold of us as we receive it by faith and it only takes hold of others when we witness to it in our lives. There can be no general proof offered to non-Christians—no written Apology to explain once and for all—as to why the claim made by Christian revelation is true. There cannot be such proof because the marks by which we are to recognise the truth of the claim—that is the criteria by which we are to judge—are given within the Christian revelation itself (see Tillich, on p.286).

We must now skip over the steps between and look at some of the conclusions to which those who begin with Kraemer tend to arrive. One such conclusion is that there is no point of contact between the Christian revelation and the non-Christian religions, so that there can be no comparison of their concepts. Alternatively it can be concluded that the only contact is by antithesis, for they are opposites. Therefore we may speak of *discontinuity* between the Christian revelation and the non-Christian religions. Holders of such theories of discontinuity tend also to make a clear separation between the period of preparation of the Old Testament people for the Gospel and the pre-Christian period of other nations, as also between world history and salvation history as a whole, and between the Christian doctrines of creation and redemption.

It will now be apparent how the questions raised in the first paragraph of this editorial review arose.

2. See, for example, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, chapter 3, second section, *The Christian Faith*.

However, by no means all the scholars who wrote chapters in this symposium agree that it is the intention of the Biblical revelation to separate itself so definitely from the religions. While wishing to maintain that the Christian revelation is unique and universal they would not wish to regard it as exclusive and would prefer to speak in terms of continuity and fulfilment rather than of discontinuity and displacement. Bouquet states the argument radically and clearly: the expression of the Christian movement was consciously conditioned by the language and thought forms of the Hellenistic—Jewish and Gentile world in which it began. There was thus a continuity of development between Hellenistic—Jewish and Greek religion on the one hand and the Christian movement on the other hand. This continuity is seen most clearly in the assertion of the Fourth Gospel that Jesus Christ is the *logos*. Therefore it is *logical* for Christians to be prepared to find in their own day sages and prophets of the non-Christian religions who are living according to the *logos*, the 'light which enlightens every man.'

If this argument were pursued without further qualification, it could lead to the syncretism that Kraemer rightly considers so dangerous: that is the overlooking of the fundamental differences that there are between the Christian revelation and the religions and philosophies in an attempt to effect a (spurious) union between them to serve some temporary cause, such as the presentation of a united religious front to meet the challenge of secularism and materialism. It seems to the present writer that the Churches of the Pacific can understand this temptation very well in the face of that vigorous and in some ways admirable religion and way of life practised by the Mormons. However, those who start with Bouquet can be saved from the weakness of syncretism as they answer the question: 'how do you tell when a non-Christian is living according to the *logos*?' Bouquet himself replies that criterion is the unique and overwhelming personality of the historical Jesus and F.N. Davey is on yet firmer ground when, in commenting on the work of the Fourth Evangelist he writes: 'he preached Christ and him crucified.....(but)... he showed that there is no situation of man...which, when truly understood, does not point beyond itself toward Christ' (p.93).

We may bring all this to a focus by considering the ancient Samoan rite known as the *ifoga*, where a man guilty of serious crime went in the early morning to bow down in front of the house of the chief—often thought of as an 'earthly god'—of the offended family, presenting a precious fine-mat as 'the price of his life.' (I draw here upon *Tala Faasolopito o le Ekalesia Samoa* (L.M.S.), by K. T. Faletoese, Malua Press, 1961, especially page 7). If this mat was accepted, the man was forgiven and could go free without fear of reprisal. Now Samoan Christians to-day make use of the words and thought-forms of the *ifoga* when speaking of their forgiveness and redemption through the offering of Christ. Does the situation in life in which the *ifoga* was set point towards or away from Christ and the forgiveness that he brings? That is, when the situation is truly understood, from the point of view of the crucified and risen Christ, do we have continuity or radical discontinuity? Is the difference between the two quantitative or qualitative, that is of degree or of kind? Is the difference between a difference of degree and a difference of kind a difference of degree or a difference of kind or some other kind of difference? Here the editor feels out of his depth, and he very much hopes that some of his readers will immediately post off some written lifelines to pull him ashore, and which he will gladly print in the Journal.

I have a suspicion that the trouble lies with these vague, general blanket terms like continuity and discontinuity, and that a close analysis of the *ifoga* would show the presence of elements of both types of relationship and of other types of relationship between it and Christian forgiveness. It is certainly the case that many Polynesian Christians regard the old culture and religion as being like an Old Testament preparation for the Gospel, and would understand very well what Tillich means by *The Latent Church*. I sometimes wonder whether if my Druid ancestors were not lost in the mists of history, but maintained much of their way of life around me, in the way in which the Polynesian culture still surrounds Polynesians, I would see more of the preparation and less of the antithesis that I now see.

If the typical danger for those who hold a fulfilment Theology of Mission is syncretism, then the danger for those who think much in terms of discontinuity is separation

and superiority; though of course none can consider themselves immune. There is another theme running through the book which acts as a corrective to this tendency of proud separation. For while it is true, as Brunner has written elsewhere that 'The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning', we must not become hypnotised by the word *church*; because fundamentally Mission is the work of the Triune God, and we are not here to build up the Church as such, so much as to claim men for the kingdom of God. Moreover, as Cullman points out (p.45), the missionary enterprise is one of the signs that we have entered the final phase of this "age", and so Mission must continue until the end. We are therefore to think of the Church as being in movement, as a continuous coming together and sending forth for the purpose of hastening the coming of the kingdom. This chimes in with what Kraemer had earlier seen, that whereas the Christian *revelation* is absolute, the Christian *religion* stands under the judgment of that revelation. Thus, by reason of its being a means to an end, the Church cannot stand aloof and remain true, while by reason of its being under judgment, Christian religion has no room for pride and superiority. This is well brought out in Wilhelm Andersen's contribution *Further Toward a Theology of Mission*, and perhaps it is this theme above all that we need to heed in the Pacific. The Church has for so long been dominant in the life of the islands that it has not yet fully awokened to its new Mission, which is to the growing number of young educated people who succumb to secularism and materialism.

Yet this is too negative a description of what is happening, for many of these young people who are working in Government schools, hospitals and police forces or as employees of commercial firms are carrying into the fuller service of their country those very ideas and principles which the Churches pioneered. Moreover when—as they often do—they become disenchanted with the Churches it is surely due in part to the failure of the Churches to move with the times. This in turn is due to a failure on the part of the Churches to understand that Christianity matures in the whole life of a nation,<sup>3</sup> and that as it does so the Church must give up functions that can be better carried out by the State, while—even

3. Cf. the early part of D. Jenkin's *Beyond Religion*, S.C.M. Press.

more important—it must let the mission of God take new forms. Let those who so believe and so practise—despite all the obstacles—take heart, for amid all our difficulties we may hear the word of our Lord: 'I am with you always, to the close of the age.'

Having said so much that is positive about Professor Anderson's book we may perhaps be permitted to observe that it would benefit from heavier editing of careless writing (e.g. page 199 line 1), and that not even from so illustrious an author as Paul Tillich will we tolerate such a deliberate grammatical solecism as "And that is what missions does"!

## The Road to Maturity

by Faigame Tagoilelagi, Youth Officer of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa.

As a youth worker among the young people of Samoa I would like to share my experience in helping them to live the Christian life and to serve the Lord where they are. In order to see their journey through adolescence in perspective an attempt must first be made to develop the concept of maturity. The adolescent is only a child growing up and adolescence is merely a period of rapid physical and emotional growth. Thus, to understand it we need first to understand what is meant by the mature person, for we who work among adolescents are trying to lead them from childhood to the stage at which a human being is what God created him to be—mature in body, mind and spirit. Let us notice him therefore five marks of maturity :

### *Insight into himself*

A mature person knows something about himself and his behaviour; he understands the workings of his mind in relation to the actions of his body.

### *Insight into his Social relationships*

We have noted that the mature person knows himself and knows what he wants to become; but not 'in a vacuum.' He sees all this in relation to the community in which he is set, and moreover, he is interested in the world around him and not only in himself. And so we come to the third mark :

### *Participation*

The mature person has indeed his insights, interests and ambitions; yet he is able to 'lose himself' in the community, in the group. And this is closely connected with :

### *Emotional maturity*

The mature person can control his emotions and avoid their bursting forth in shameful behaviour; because he has the courage to 'face the enemy' even though the enemy appears in many different disguises.

*Faith*

No doubt there are some who would say that the question of whether faith is a mark of a mature person is debateable, but my own experience of young people leaves me in no doubt that it is an essential mark of maturity, and I think of it as 'the outgoing of the whole nature to what it believes to be true or rather to Him who is held to be the Truth.'

It has been said that the art of living depends on our making properly three choices, those of the right work, the right partner in marriage and the right religion. Let us then consider briefly the attitude of young people in Samoa to these three matters.

**The attitude to work**

When I was seven years of age my teacher told me how men first learned to fly. Immediately, I wanted to be a pilot, but later on when I heard about and saw aeroplane crashes during the Second World War I changed my mind! As we all know there are sudden impulses about work that come to us when we are very young, and many of them lead to nothing.

Among present day young people in Samoa work has a very shallow meaning. The object of work is that the worker be able to consume. Work is a means of taking and not of giving, of service or of sacrifice. Very few indeed think of work as a vocation, something given to us by God to do for him. It is true that some pastors proclaim that all work is sacred, but both young and old find this teaching novel, and especially difficult to accept because of modern economic changes in our way of life. Many parents hold that 'white collar' jobs are best for they are well paid, while in contrast the dirty jobs like digging and planting are not well remunerated. Moreover there is fierce competition among the people to obtain as many 'western' luxuries as possible, which again leads young people to think of work as a means of monetary reward.

Another wrong attitude to work is that is a means of obtaining *personal identity*. To be a boss with three fountain pens in one's shirt pocket is very desirable.

The young person is not in effect left to make up his own mind about his work; the family need for money acts as a force which pushes him into a type of work for which he may not be prepared and equipped, and sometimes he is enabled to obtain the position not so much by reason of his suitability as by reason of his family connections or influence with the noble ranks in society. Of course neither the Government nor the business houses can provide jobs for all those who would like them when they leave school; only the brainy ones find openings, and the majority will go home to work on the family plantation.

What have we Christians to say about this? Firstly that we need to acknowledge that there have been failures in the past ministry of the Church to her young people. Perhaps it would not be unfair to say that the teaching of the Gospel was directed to the *brains* rather than the everyday lives of the children and young people; it was directed towards the giving of Biblical knowledge unrelated to the people's needs. So to-day the brain is very sharp and the spirit very blunt. I can illustrate the truth of this by recalling how disappointed some people were by my explanation at a Sunday School Teachers Refresher Course of the aim of Sunday Schools. My statement that their true aim is to teach the children to worship at their own level disappointed the hearers because they understood the function of Sunday Schools quite differently: as ministering to the *brains* of the children.

If it is largely true that the children have no place in the community generally, it is all the more essential for the Church to realise that it is within its power to give them their rightful place within the Church community and so to enable them to satisfy certain basic needs for their development to maturity. To restrict their understanding of the Gospel to a purely intellectual one at the outset of their lives is to lead them to have wrong attitudes to life as a whole later on. Yet we must be patient, for in this part of the

world the Gospel is still 'green,' and we must allow time for ripening. But even now we can begin to see that the Church is required to answer the needs of its young people for love and acceptance, for growth under conditions of law and order and true freedom, and for the means to deepen their sense of mystery. If such conditions are met, then the young people will be led on to tasks which are bigger than themselves, to appreciate the gift which comes wholly from outside themselves and to know a presence that is wholly other than themselves, thence to know their obligation to someone greater than themselves and to find a destiny higher than the satisfaction of their bodily needs. It is in this way that the young people will come to see that every good work done for the benefit of our neighbour is sacred, and so they will be claimed by the Great Worker, Jesus Christ, who was Carpenter, Teacher, Lawyer and Doctor of the body and of the Soul—he who knows every work because he was with God in the beginning and works among us still.

If I had to point to two evils in particular that need to be noted especially in any doctrine of work for Samoa, I would say that dishonesty and lying are the two hells of Samoan workmen and especially of the youngsters. It is imperative that those who lead young people in the name of Christ shall so walk that the young people see in us the reflection of God's honesty and God's righteousness.

### The Attitude to Sex.

We must begin here by setting down some of the ways by which the Samoan child and adolescent learns about sexual matters, and some of the experiences that may be formative of his attitude to his body.

- (a) The Samoan infant has a very intimate life with his mother until he is old enough to leave her. The baby is fed on demand and sleeps with the mother; and indeed it is frequently the case that the children in general sleep with their parents.
- (b) In the open life of a Samoan house the child hears much adult conversation, and picks up the terminology of sex matters; as also by listening to swearing.

- (c) It is very easy in villages for children and young people to come together in the moonlight. Here they learn the language of sex from one another and in some cases become familiar with the practice of sexual intercourse and of masturbation.
- (d) The separation of the single women and widows into one group and the single men and widowers into another—all girls and boys leaving school enter their respective groups—has an unfortunate side-effect, namely, that when the groups do come together socially the activities sometimes go beyond the proper limits.
- (e) Nowadays there are modern sex-stimulants like the movies and comics which play upon the weakness of the adolescents and encourage early sex-unions.

To this familiar picture we must add a special consideration, namely the attitude of grown-ups to teen-age friendships. Because the Samoan word for *friend* has strong sexual overtones parents are inclined to resist and to forbid overt friendships between boy and girl, and will not allow friends to come into the home. Thus what is forbidden in the light takes place in the dark and leads to fornication and 'bush-marriages.' Moreover, there is a tendency to believe that when young people come together for a social or a dance they do so not to enjoy themselves but to find a husband or a wife.

So it comes about that young people look upon sexual activity purely as something for bodily enjoyment, without regard to the evil consequences of free intercourse. They take over adult attitudes such as 'nature is nature', and 'sexual intercourse is not a sin provided that both parties agree to it.' Hence many are 'married' illegally, Christian Marriage does not mean much and divorce is very common.

Obviously then the Gospel has not yet touched the heart of the matter and even the sower of the Word regards sex as sinful. It follows from this that we should consider the following ways of helping young people:

- (a) There must be sex education in the home, at school and in the Church.
- (b) Mixed youth clubs should be encouraged, to provide opportunities for young people to learn to respect each other. There should be sex education worked into the programme of the organisation.
- (c) Society as a whole should explore all good ways and means of filling the leisure time of young people.
- (d) The basis of all this endeavour should be our understanding of the will and purpose of God for men and women. Our sexual powers are a gift to us from God who has said 'It is not good that the man should be alone', (Genesis 2: 18) and who for companionship in body, mind and spirit gave the gift of woman (Genesis 2: 22). Yet sex becomes a problem because of man's disobedience (Genesis 3); he sins and falls short of the glory of God (Romans 3: 23). He has to be saved (John 3: 16).

Upon the Old Testament teaching of Genesis 2 and 3 Jesus based his teaching about the divine unification of the opposite sexes: it is a life-long union (Mark 10: 9). Far from being taboo to our Lord this subject is a fit vehicle to convey the truth about the relationship between himself and his followers: he is the bridegroom and they are the bride; they are prepared and intended for each other to eternity (Mark 2: 18-20, Matthew 22: 2-12, Luke 12: 35 ff.). Paul takes up the theme in Ephesians 5: 21 ff., saying that Christ loves his body, the Church, as a man loves his wife who is his own flesh.

In the coming together of a man and a woman we both extend the creative act of God (by making a child) and at the same time learn the meaning of true life, which is—partnership. (The last two paragraphs are adapted from The Statement of Doctrine of the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa, article No. 20, Commentary). Finally, the body is temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6: 19), and we are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3: 16). Therefore our body must not be defiled by unspiritual union, for it is a residing place of God himself.

### The attitude to religion.

Two oft-recurring phrases represent a tradition handed down from one generation of Samoans to another: 'Samoa is a Christian country' and 'we know the Bible.' Because of this tradition, or one might say because of this 'infection,' religion is a community routine rather than a conviction to God. In other words we have a pharisaic religion. Let there be no misunderstanding here: there *are* true Christians, both young and old. The majority of the people go to Church and read the Bible. They offer family prayers practically every evening and again in the morning when they arise they pray. Yet there is something wrong and something missing in this worship. It is very hard to define what it is, because it involves the whole community. However, the attitude of young people to religion will perhaps make things clearer:

- (a) They see that among themselves and the whole community the tide has changed and religion is on the decline, particularly as practised at home.
- (b) Material things are becoming more real; religious things are mere ideas.
- (c) Religion is properly something confined to Sunday; if you live a holy life on Sunday, what you do for the rest of the week does not matter.
- (d) Religion has to do with the spirit only and not with the body and the mind.
- (e) Because young people are familiar with words like religion, Bible, church, prayer, hymns and so forth, the words evoke little response when heard, and religion as a whole has become customary to the point where it does not mean very much. When I go out to youth clubs at night and give Bible lessons, I can see the eyes of the boys and girls on the speaker but their soul is somewhere in the blue beyond! When I realised that to talk about religion was not interesting to them I changed my direction and found that discussion and questions about the Bible, together with other methods, appealed far more than mere talking.

(f) Young people look at religion as a *chatter-box*: too much talking and too little practice.

How can the Church help young people to grow mature in their religious attitudes? I am sure that there must be religious education of the adults so that the right kind of faith is encouraged in the home, which is the first school of experience of God. We need to make our worship and our discussion of religion within the Church much more relevant to the real longings of human hearts, far more practical and far less theoretical. There must also be a breaking down of barriers: the fellowship of all ages must be encouraged, and false barriers between secular and sacred must be swept away: such ideas as that pastors alone are holy and their people are secular; that worship is only possible in home and church; that the faith has no say in the affairs of society.

In conclusion, this is not a complete record of the adolescent and his problems in modern Samoa, but I have tried to share at least some of them with readers of the *Journal* and to pray with you for all the young people of the Church of God, so that his name may be glorified in them and in us. Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians, 'So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.' (1 Corinthians 10: 31). To worship God is to worship in spirit and in truth for such the Father seeks to worship him (John 4: 23, 24). When we become mature we shall love the Lord with *all* our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind. And we shall love our neighbour as *ourselves*.

## Pacific Scripture Translation

by the Revd H. K. Moulton, Deputy Translations Secretary, British and Foreign Bible Society.

This is a vast subject. But then the Pacific is a vast area, an area in which Christian missionary work has been extensive, and where one of the earliest aims of missionaries has always been to translate the Scriptures. A few facts about the numbers of Scriptures actually published will indicate something of the size of the picture:

	<i>Bibles O.T. Portions</i>	<i>New Testaments</i>	<i>N.T. Portions</i>
New Hebrides	1	9	7
Loyalty Is.	3	—	—
New Caledouia	—	—	1
Fiji & Rotuma	1	—	1
Tonga	1	—	—
Samoa	1	—	—
Cook Is.	2	—	—
Tahiti	1	—	—
Hawaii	1	—	—
Caroline Is.	—	—	1
Gilbert Is.	—	—	1
Solomons Is.	1	4	8
New Britain	—	1	1
New Guinea T. T. & Papua	2	2	11
	14	16	31
			57

These figures do not include a great deal of work in progress, nor publications of other Bible Societies than the B. F. B. S.

This article will take a brief look at the history of translation work in four areas:

1. The New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands and New Caledonia;

2. Fiji, Rotuma, Samoa and Tonga;
3. The Gilbert and Ellice Islands;
4. The Solomon Islands, New Britain and the eastern half of the great island of New Guinea.

The selection may be a little arbitrary, but it will at any rate cover most of the places in which this journal circulates, though it will not include the western half of New Guinea, where translational activities have hitherto been linked with the Netherlands East Indies, now Indonesia, rather than with the Pacific.

### 1. The New Hebrides, Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia.

As the figures show, a great deal of translation work has been done in the New Hebrides. Much of it lies in the past. Aneityum, the most southerly of the islands, had the first New Testament, and still has the only Bible, but that was published in 1879 and we have no record of any subsequent work.

Fresh activity, however, still continues. A translation of Acts into a new language, Erakor, has begun, though there is no news of rapid progress. The Hog Harbour dialect of Santo, which has had a Gospel since 1905 with much of the New Testament since added, as well as the Psalms, is now advancing towards the completion of the New Testament. Four revisions are in progress: Malekula: Aulua, Paama, Nguni: Efate and Eastern Tanna. The Revd. R. W. Murray is working on Old Testament translation, so as to produce a full Bible in Nguni: Tongoa.

The Loyalty Islands, which are French, have three Bibles, one for each of the three main islands: Uvea, Lifu and Maré. There has been no translational activity in Uvea or Maré for many years, but the Lifu New Testament and Psalms are now being very carefully revised by a committee headed by Pastor Marc Lacheret of the Paris Evangelical Mission. No revision has taken place since 1884, so that new work on the Lifu Bible was somewhat desirable. The world of scholarship has moved on. Spelling has changed, and the language used in addressing Jesus—language that was reserved for addressing chiefs—is becoming a back number to-day.

New Caledonia's one New Testament is in a language spoken by less than a thousand people. Sales are small, and at the present rate we have stocks in hand for two generations! For this and other reasons there has been no translation work for a long time.

## 2. Fiji, Rotuma, Samoa and Tonga.

There is much more activity in this area, which I visited on a translations tour during the middle of 1962.

The history of the Fijian Bible is a long and interesting one. The first Gospel, Mark, was translated as long ago as 1839. London Bible House Library has an imperfect copy. It has also a copy of a reader printed in 1835, which is the earliest specimen of printing in Fijian, though it was actually printed in Tonga.

The great martyr missionary, John Hunt, completed the New Testament in 1847, and the Old Testament, the work of Hazlewood, Calvert and Lyth, appeared in 1864. Frederick Langham's revised Bible was printed in 1902, and remains the Fijian Bible till to-day, though it was very slightly revised in 1931 by C. O. Lelean and C. M. Churchward. The latter's name will appear later in connection with both Rotuman and Tongan, a remarkable record.

There was a warm controversy in 1937 over the question of Fijian orthography. It was felt by some that the system devised by the early missionaries was phonetically inaccurate and that a number of major changes was desirable. The missionaries, however, and such leading business figures as Sir Maynard Hedstrom, felt that these changes would be confusing and unwise, and this view was supported by the Bible Society. The traditional orthography therefore remains.

The Fijian Church has revision work in mind, and the question has been raised in the Methodist Synod, which appointed a sub-committee to discuss it. There appears to be no very strong demand at the moment, though it may come in due course. There are a number of pre-requisites for a good revision; there must be a clear desire for it by those in a position to understand

the situation; there must be someone, either national or missionary, competent to act as chief reviser; and there must be adequate support for him (or her) in a strong revision committee and in consultants who may be called on for less concentrated assistance. Unless there are the right people to do it, a revision, however desirable, cannot be safely attempted. There must be, on the one hand, an adequate knowledge of the Biblical languages and sufficient scholarship based on them. On the other hand, there must be a perfect command of the receptor language. This is more likely to be found in an educate and trained national than in a missionary, though that statement needs some safeguarding.

These are ideal requirements, not always to be found in their entirety, but without a reasonable proportion of them a revision may do more harm than good. If, for instance, an early missionary translation had good scholarship but imperfect idiom, an uninformed attempt to improve the style may well lead to serious loss of accuracy in translation.

### **Rotuma.**

Rotuma is a small island with a population of only a few thousands. It has had church links both with Samoa and with Fiji, but from early days it has had its own Scriptures. A few selections were printed in Tasmania in 1857. St. Luke's Gospel and other New Testament selections were published in Melbourne in 1867. The New Testament appeared in 1870, and a corrected edition in 1905. Revision work and Old Testament translation work were begun after the first world war. The B. F. B. S. has no record of any O. T. publication, with the exception of some Psalms and a special edition of the book of Jonah. New Testament revision, however, proceeded under the care of the Revd. C. M. Churchward, the first of the three island languages with which he has been concerned. Proposed changes in spelling, in vocabulary and in proper names were so drastic that the special edition of Jonah, with two versions in two columns and with various explanations, was published in 1928 to prepare people for the novelty. (There is nothing in the records about the original publication of Jonah). The revised New Testament appeared in 1930. Mr. Churchward was

assisted in its preparation by Mesulam Titifanua. For this and other Pacific linguistic work Mr. Churchward was awarded a doctorate by Melbourne University. He is still, at the age of 73, vigorously engaged upon corrections of his original work.

### Samoa.

Scripture publication in Samoa goes back to 1836, when Samuel Wilson, one of the early L.M.S. missionaries translated St. Matthew's Gospel after only eighteen months in the country. This was printed in Tahiti, but a mission press was established in Samoa soon afterwards, and in 1841 St. John's Gospel was printed there. The L. M. S. missionaries went systematically to work on the New Testament, which was published book by book with remarkable speed until, in 1846, it was possible to bind some sets of the portions into the first complete New Testament. Old Testament work continued at once, together with a New Testament revision, printed by the Bible Society in London in 1849. The third and final volume of the Old Testament was published in Samoa in 1855, and there were great public rejoicings at the completion of the work. A day of special thanksgiving was observed throughout the islands.

The Samoan translators, however, did not rest on their laurels. A revised Bible, the work mainly of the Revd. G. Pratt, was published in 1862. A further revision followed in 1872, and yet another, seen through the press by the Rev. G. Turner, followed in 1884. That was the climax of the Samoan translators' efforts. Since that date only reprints have been issued, with minor corrections. As recently as 1954, after a gap of forty-five years in our records, we were assured that no changes were required.

It is the printer, however, who has stirred up the matter again. The Samoan Bible has been reprinted so often that the plates are too worn to use again, and the whole Bible will have to be reset. This is obviously the moment at which to make any alterations that may be required.

On enquiry the general opinion seemed to be that this was not the moment for a major revision, but that a light revision dealing with quite a large number of

minor details would be desirable. I was very glad that, during my Pacific tour in the middle of 1962, I was able, with the Revd. P. R. Thomas, Bible Society Secretary in New Zealand, to visit Western Samoa and discuss matters on the spot at a meeting with the Revd. Dr. J. Bradshaw and the Revd. T. Ioelu of the Congregational Christian Church. The Methodist Church in Samoa would also have been represented, but unfortunately were not able to fit in with our dates. The Roman Catholics in Samoa are specially interested, as their own New Testament is unsatisfactory and out of print, and it was a pleasure to have Father Laurence Ross S. M., with us in our discussions. This is one of the many places where the Roman Church is showing its revived concern for the Word of God.

It was agreed that a joint committee, with Dr. Bradshaw as convener, should prepare a light revision by the middle of 1963. This committee will correct obvious misprints and mistranslations, take note of major changes in Samoa vocabulary, consider the introduction of paragraph headings and inverted commas, remove italics, include references and a few explanatory footnotes, and generally attempt to improve the appearance of the Book. It will take care, however, not in any way to go beyond what would be generally acceptable to the Church. That could defeat all the good it hopes to do.

### **Tonga.**

The history of the Tonga Bible is long, complicated and fascinating. A little early missionary work was done in the Tonga Islands by L. M. S. missionaries, so active all over the Pacific, but regularly established work is dated from the arrival of the Revd. John Thomas, a Wesleyan missionary, in 1826, and a large majority of the population to-day is Wesleyan, including Her Majesty Queen Salote, though there are offshoots which must be mentioned later.

A printer came in 1831 and Scripture portions, as well as other books, soon began to be published. The Bible Society made grants of paper for these. Much translational activity over a number of years resulted in the printing of the complete New Testament on Vava'u Island in 1849. The chief reviser was Stephen Rabone, but among others associated with him were

Thomas Adams, brother of the astronomer, John Crouch Adams, who discovered Neptune, and Thomas West, who went on to be the chief translator of the Old Testament and edited the complete Bible, published by the B. F. B. S. in London in 1862. The Tonga Wesleyans had by now ceased their direct connection with the Church in England, and were linked with Australia, as they are to this day, though they have an independent conference of their own.

The 1862 Bible has remained the Bible Society Bible until 1962, but in fact it was not long before the Wesleyan Church in Tonga realized the need for improving it. The Tongan style was somewhat bald, and advances in scholarship, due mainly to the work of Westcott and Hort and the preparation of the English Revised Version, made revision highly desirable. Fortunately the ideal man was available, and though I hesitate to speak in glowing terms of my own great-uncle, the Revd. James Egan Moulton, I merely pass on what I have been told by others. His name is a household word in Tonga to this day.

Along with a young Tongan chief, Tevita Finau, he went to England in 1878, where he had the assistance of his elder brother, Dr. William Fiddian Moulton, my grandfather, who was a member of the English New Testament revision committee. The result was that, when the New Testament was printed in 1880, a few months before the English Revised New Testament, it was based on the scholarship of that epoch-making work. Unfortunately the rules of the B. F. B. S. at that time required that translation should be made from the Textus Receptus. It had, therefore, to be published by the Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

During Mr. Moulton's absence in England a serious political situation had arisen which was to affect Tongan history for the next decade. The Revd. Shirley Baker, Chairman of the Wesleyan Church, had become Premier to the King, and resigned from the Wesleyan ministry. He gained an increasing influence over the ageing monarch, and exercised a growing persecution of his old church. In the name of independence from Australia, a Free Church of Tonga was set up in 1885. Most Wesleyans took the persecution in a true Christian spirit, but a small group

made an attempt on the Premier's life. Further reprisals followed, and it was considered wise for Mr. Moulton to return to Australia. Soon afterwards, however, Mr. Baker accused the British consul in Tonga of complicity in the plot on his life, and was deported by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific on a sensational visit in 1890. Mr. Moulton was then free to return, and to be reconciled to the old king. He became Chairman once more and, though living mainly in Australia, paid regular visits to the Island, completing his Old Testament translation work in 1902.

This piece of history is relevant for the consideration of the present Tongan Bible situation. A union between the Wesleyans and the Free Church of Tonga was effected in 1928 by the wisdom of Queen Salote, under the name of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga. She and her family are Free Wesleyans, as are fifty per cent of the population. The Moulton Bible is used in the Free Wesleyan Churches, and by as many individuals as can afford it at its unsubsidized price. Unfortunately a number of Free Church members decided not to join the union. They still continue under the old name, and now form just under twenty per cent of the population. A split from them, the Church of Tonga, numbers about eight per cent. Because of the old antagonisms these churches have refused to use the Moulton Bible officially. Hence the continued demand for both Bibles.

After the war, Dr. Churchward, whose name has already been noted in connection with Rotuman and Fijian Scriptures, was engaged by the Tongan Government to prepare a dictionary and grammar. The Free Wesleyans felt that it was an opportune time to suggest a revision of the Bible, hoping that it might become the national Bible for Tonga. Dr. Churchward completed the New Testament between 1959 and 1961. He describes it as relying both upon the B. F. B. S. version and Moulton, but more upon the latter. The use of honorific language in Tongan is complicated and delicate. Dr. Churchward feels that the language used to our Lord during His earthly life by those who wholly or partially failed to recognize who He was should not be too honorific. The Royal Traditions Committee has its doubts about this point of view. The Churches also feel that they have not had enough opportunity to study the revision.

It was considered desirable that the Revd. P. R. Thomas and I should visit Tonga to discuss the whole situation. An intensive week, during which we had the honour of an audience with Queen Salote, culminated in a meeting presided over by the Premier, Prince Tungi, and attended by representatives of the Free Wesleyans, the Church of Tonga, the Anglicans and the Seventh Day Adventists. There was also a representative of the Free Church of Tonga, but he announced that his church could not co-operate in the work. The Roman Catholics, however, are interested in the project.

It was noted at the meeting that there are sufficient stocks of the B. F. B. S. in hand to last for several years to come. There was a strong desire that the Moulton Bible should at long last be taken over by the B. F. B. S. and published at its subsidized rate. This has now been agreed to in London, and it is hoped to reprint it next year with no changes except in spelling and typography. Arrangements were made for the study of Dr. Churchward's draft New Testament, but there was considerable discussion about Old Testament revision. It was wondered whether, despite Dr. Churchward's amazing vigour, he would be able to maintain that vigour so as to complete the long and arduous task. It was also felt that a suitably qualified Tongan would be the best man for the work.

The Free Wesleyans made a most generous proposal which resolved the committee's difficulties. They offered the services of one of their leading ministers, the Revd. Dr. John 'Amanaki Havea, vice-principal of Tupou College. This offer was gratefully accepted, and Dr. Havea will devote the major part of his time to revision work from the beginning of 1963, keeping in close touch with others who will be able to help him. Meantime, stocks of the B. F. B. S. Bible and the reprinted Moulton Bible will ensure that there will be no shortage of Scriptures. When the new revision is complete, we shall be able to see what the demand is for each of the three Bibles, and act accordingly. We trust that there will be a happy issue out of this tangled story.

To be continued.

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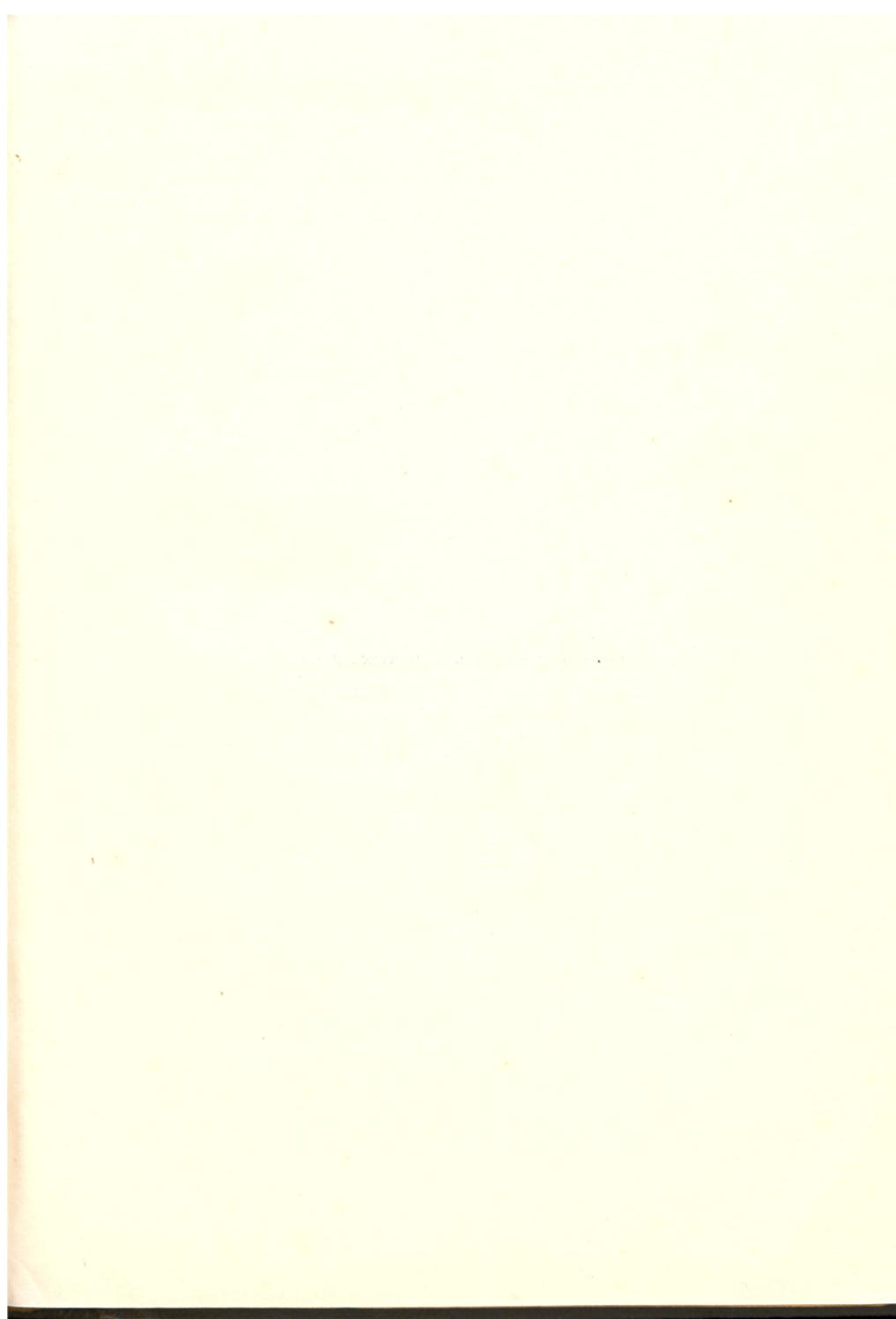
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